

The Woman with \$65,000,000 Who Weeps Every Day



Mrs. Russell Sage

NEW YORK.—Mrs. Russell Sage has new velvet carpets in her home at No. 632 Fifth avenue—soft, rich and beautiful, with deep, thick pile into which the foot sinks.

"I am glad," said a woman who has known Mrs. Sage for years, "that she could have those velvet carpets before she died. In all the years of her married life down at the house at No. 506 Fifth avenue she had nothing but ancient Brussels carpet on her parlor floor. It was one she had when she first went to keeping house, and had those great, set medallions in it that they used to use for carpet patterns 40 years ago. The nap was worn off all over it so that the brown warp showed through. When it finally got so bad that it was impossible to use it longer matting was put down in the parlor, as it long had been in the rest of the house. She always used the old horsehair furniture she had when she was married, such as one saw in country parlors 40 years ago, and there were great cracks in the parlor walls of the house at Forty-second street which went for years without fixing."

"Mrs. Sage suffered from mortification at such things just as much as any other woman would, and I'm glad she's able to have the velvet carpets for a few years before she dies. But they came too late to give her much pleasure. After they had all been put down and the furniture was in place she walked through the house observing and admiring, and then sat down and cried. She said not a word in explanation, but it was easy to understand. She was thinking of all the stunted years when she might have enjoyed such things, and now she has them when she is too old to care very much."

"There scarcely is a day that Mrs. Sage does not weep," continued this old friend of hers. "She simply sits and cries at the intolerable burden of having \$65,000,000 on her shoulders, at the burden of distributing that huge fortune in the way that will do the most good. She is 80 years old and has a New England conscience. She wants to do just the right thing with it all, and it requires an amount of thought and study and imposes a feeling of responsibility that is hard on an old woman who only wants a quiet corner to spend her few remaining years in."

MRS. SAGE has aged very much since her husband's death. She has grown thin, pale, bent and wrinkled. Aside from the natural grief over Mr. Sage's death, Mrs. Sage was plunged almost instantly into a storm of appeals which amounted to a persecution. Her mail for some years before Mr. Sage's death had amounted to between 40 and 50 letters a day. It leaped instantly to 900 a day, and the entire surplus was appeals for money. Within two months after Mr. Sage's death 7,000 letters were carted away from her house unopened. Two secretaries work night and day almost to handle Mrs. Sage's private mail. If she attempted to read ten per cent. of it personally she would be able to do nothing else.

At first she tried conscientiously to

look it over herself. She was astonished and disgusted at some of it. Before Mr. Sage's body was cold in its coffin she received a letter from a New York man whom she never had seen asking her to send him a check for \$1,000 by return mail, and he was kind enough to inclose a stamped envelope for reply. She never asked for advice as to the disposal of this fortune, yet within the first two months of her widowhood she received letters from more than 1,000 different men, instructing her how to give away her money so as to do the most good. One of them, the president of a college, wrote her that if she would give him charge of her entire fortune he would invest it so that it would support his college forever. And, far from mentioning the gratitude of his college in such an event, he told her that she ought to be thankful and grateful that she had an opportunity to do such a splendid work.

THE letters that really affected Mrs. Sage at this time were pathetic appeals for help from individuals. Many of these were to all appearances genuine, the appeals of poor and ignorant persons, suffering in want and hardship, and pathetically confident that the kind-hearted woman who had more money than she knew what to do with would give them the little that would make them happy. Some of these letters distressed Mrs. Sage greatly; but they came not only from every state in the union but from foreign countries. Had she responded to them she would have dissipated her entire fortune in small checks to individuals all over the world. So finally Mrs. Sage gave up her mail. Now a letter which is manifestly from a personal friend is given her, but nothing else reaches her eye.

It is not only impossible to reach Mrs. Sage by letter—it has become one of the impossible things to see her. Mrs. Sage formerly was one of the most approachable of women. Not a trace of snobbery or purse pride is to be found in her make-up. A plain, old-fashioned village woman she started her career, and that she remains to this day. She never cared anything about fine clothes or society, and her friends were chosen by preference from among the people who were doing the work of the world. With professional women she was particularly friendly. That period of her own life between 1847, when she was graduated, and 1869, when she married Mr. Sage, was spent in teaching school whenever her health would permit, and she never felt above anyone who earned his or her living. Anyone who had ever been introduced to Mrs. Sage could see her as easily in her own home as if she had been the wife of a clerk instead of a multi-millionaire.

BUT the papers had barely announced Mr. Sage's death when a rush began upon her house that beggared description. Mrs. Sage had been advertised to the world not only as a very rich woman but as a very charitable one, who intended to distribute the fortune which Mr. Sage spent his life in heaping up. There are men who spend their lives watching for just such people and whose standing

in the educational or charitable institutions with which they are connected depends on the size of the contributions they can secure. Innumerable persons of this class besieged Mrs. Sage's house, and she frequently was amazed at the character and standing of such persons and at the means they used to secure interviews with her. Human strength could not endure the strain, and she intrenched herself behind a solid wall of humanity.

The experience of one woman who tried to pierce this rampart will illustrate the process. This woman was a Philadelphian of good family and high social standing, interested in a worthy object. She was not the type of woman who is denied admission anywhere, and she came to New York armed with a letter of introduction from an old and highly esteemed friend of Mrs. Sage. She drove straight to the house, at No. 632 Fifth avenue, supposing that her visiting card and letter of introduction would be enough to at least gain her admission. The front door was opened about three inches and there appeared in the aperture a face quite wooden in its immobility.

THIS, the woman afterwards found, was old Nelson, who belongs to the nearly extinct species of old family servant. He is known among those familiar with the subject as "Mrs. Sage's dragon," and his business is to keep people on the wrong side of that front door. He would not touch either card or letter, and shut the door in the Philadelphia lady's face.

Then she set in motion the various means of communication known to civilization. She telegraphed, telephoned, sent letters by special messenger. Nothing received the slightest reply. She went to the pastor of the Dutch Reformed church where Mrs. Sage worshipped. He was courteous but obdurate. Hundreds of such requests came to him; it was impossible to grant them. She went to Mrs. Sage's country home on Long Island, thinking that in the more easy atmosphere of country life the guard would be relaxed. A maid rejected her card and turned her from the door with no more ceremony than if she were a peddler. She set to work to find personal friends of Mrs. Sage who would introduce her. In every direction she encountered the human wall, made up of lawyers, physicians, detectives, nurses, secretaries, servants, all inflexibly barring the way to Mrs. Sage. The lady from Philadelphia returned to the city of Philadelphia a sadder and wiser woman.

SOME ONE wrote a book once on "Prisoners of Poverty." Mrs. Sage is a prisoner of wealth. Behind this human rampart she sits, afraid that some one may reach to torment her. In the old days, when Mrs. Sage had only a little money to give to anything, her personal interests were all in charities and educational work for women—the Woman's hospital, the Woman's Exchange, the Pascal Institute, the Emma Willard School for Girls, the Home for Aged Women at Amsterdam avenue and One Hundred and Fourth street. She used to like to go around to meetings of these societies, and of other women's organizations. She would slip in quietly and unobtrusively and often rise to say a few words in the discussion of business or program. All that is stopped. She almost fears to appear in public, so much is she haunted by the dread of appeals for money.

CURIOUS stories can be encountered among the old acquaintances of Mrs. Sage to show her limited command of money in the old days. She was deeply interested in the Woman's hospital, but when one of the board of managers asked her for a contribution one day Mrs. Sage confessed that she could not give money. "I can give you clothing and hospital supplies," said she, "for Mr. Sage will pay bills



GIVE! GIVE!

that I run up, but I can't give you cash."

This explains Mrs. Sage's generosity at times and her apparent lack of it at others when cash was needed and she could not give and would not explain why. Her lack of command of money went to almost incredible extents at times. An old member of the Emma Willard Alumnae association recalls an incident at a meeting which took place at Mrs. Sage's home years ago, with Mrs. Sage presiding. The association was obliged to count every penny, and when some committee member made a request for some postage stamps to send out in letters there was discussion as to whether or not the stamps should be sent. The

amount asked for was only 38 cents' worth, but Mrs. Sage let the discussion go on till finally a self-supporting woman arose and said: "Please don't let us waste any more time over this. I will pay for the stamps."

ONE woman who knew Mrs. Sage well in the years when she lived at No. 506 Fifth avenue declares that she never had more than \$50 a week to run that house and pay all her own expenses. Some of her earliest expenditures of money after she became a widow are rather pathetic to one who can read between the lines. One of them was to remove the remains of her grandparents on her father's side from their almost forgotten burial place on a farm near Troy to the family burial plot in Troy. Another was to repair the tombstones of her maternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Pierson, at Sag Harbor, and frame them in granite to keep them from falling and crumbling away. One of her few personal indulgences has been to buy an automobile, a thing that Mr. Sage never owned. The difference in giving to the things in which she always was interested is very apparent. The million to the Emma Willard school has been mentioned. She has given \$125,000 to the Home for Aged Women at Amsterdam avenue and One Hundred and Fourth street.

TO THE cynic who sneers that great wealth is a burden easily gotten rid of it may be responded that Mrs. Sage is getting rid of hers as fast as she can reasonably be expected to. Following is a list of her benefactions to date:

Autumn of 1906, School building fund of Sag Harbor	\$50,000
Autumn of 1906, New York University	300,000
1907, Renaissance Polytechnic institute	1,000,000
1907, Emma Willard School for girls	1,000,000
1907, Sage foundation	10,000,000
1907, American Seamen's Friend society	150,000
1907, Syrian Protestant college at Beirut	75,000
1907, Building for international committee of Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A.	350,000
1907, School building fund, Sag Harbor, additional	50,000
1907, Bed in Syracuse hospital	5,000
1907, Y. M. C. A. naval branch, Brooklyn	200,000
1907, Institute of Pathology at New York City hospital	300,000
1907, Home for Aged and Indigent Females	125,000
1907, Teachers' college, University of Syracuse	100,000
1907, Y. M. C. A., Long Island City	100,000
1907, Restoration of Governor's room in New York city hall	25,000
1908, Princeton university	250,000
1908, American Bible society (contribution on raising same amount)	500,000
1908, Rhododendron garden to Central park	50,000
1908, United Hebrew Charities, emergency fund for unemployed	5,000
1908, First Presbyterian church at Sag Harbor	25,000
1908, Constitution island for United States Military Preparatory school	50,000
Total	\$15,190,000

BESIDES this there have been many lesser or indefinite gifts. She gave \$30,000 in a lump to the Margaret Sage Industrial School for Girls and Boys at Inwood, L. I., and has promised \$5,000 a year endowment. She has pledged the National Suffrage association \$5,000 a year for the next five years. She gave \$15,000 for a memorial window in the First Presbyterian church of Syracuse, and various smaller sums to the Woman's Exchange and the Pascal Institute. She financed the legislative movement against racetrack betting. She gave the relatives of Mr. Sage \$550,000, doubling the bequests left them by him. She tips a number of the Central park laborers five dollars every New Year's, January 1, 1907, when she tipped 225 of them, was her largest bestowal of this kind. The Sage Foundation to "improve social and living conditions in the United States," has financed, among other things, the playground and the anti-tuberculosis movements. June 20 last she gave a lawn party to 900 school children of Sag Harbor and per-

JOHN HENRY ON SANSKRIT STORIES

BY GEO. V. HOBART, ("HUGH M'HUGH.")

Dear Bud: I'm going to pull something on you in this letter that will make you get up and leave the room. Just to kill time, I've been dabbling in literature.

(P. S.—Time died a violent death, all right, all right!)

I want you to read these little stories from the Sanscrit, and scold me when we meet.

Once more, go to it, Bunch!

The Finish of Bilddad.

And it came to pass that Bilddad the son of Jimdad was worried within himself, and he communed with himself, saying: "Behold! I must join the Brethren of the Long Thirst in secret session this night, but what good thing shall I say unto my wife when she chides me with having no great purpose in going forth?"

And Bilddad the son of Jimdad



"What Talk Have Ye, Bilddad? Quit Your Joshing."

glanced disconsolately at his favorite newspaper, and his heart was like lead within him.

And even as he read a smile broke forth from the gloom that overshadowed his face, and this smile was like unto the first faint flush of the wakening East, and he arose with gurglesome glee as does one whose mind is relieved of a mighty burden.

And he communed with himself softly, saying: "Politics! 'Tis a pipe!"

And Bilddad the son of Jimdad called his wife to his side, and he spake unto her, saying: "Maud, the soft whiteness of thy cheek is fairer than the bloom that loves to linger on the lilies of the Nile! Thine eyes are twin thieves, which by some sorcery have taken the light from yon poor, weeping star, and now that light must lurk forever in those languorously limpid depths! Thy smile, O Maud, is like the scintillating sweetness of a summer's sky!"

And Maud, the wife of Bilddad the son of Jimdad, made answer, and said: "What talk have ye, Bilddad? Quit your joshing, or I'll baste you with the broom. Got to go out again to-night, I suppose. What is it this time? The Inner Circle of the Royal Sons of a Krupp Gun? Oh is it the Ancient Order of the Accidental Dollar Bill?"

And Bilddad the son of Jimdad answered and said: "Nay, sweet wife of my weary heart, 'tis none of these. 'Tis politics that beckons me forth into the noisome night. Knowest thou not that the two Great Parties will soon have to grapple in the final death-struggle, and my uncertain vote still wavers in the winds of indecision? Therefore, this night, O wife of my weary heart, I go forth to join a carolous group of statisticians, astrologists, soothsayers, and seers to the end that my eyes may clearly see the light and my vote may count upon the side of Right. Be thou of good cheer, beloved, for I shall sit at the feet of the wise men of Egypt and imbibe much wisdom. Wherefore, thou need'st not wait up for me, for politics is like unto an owl-train for latecomers, and the soothsayers say not neither do they sooth until the world is in the dead of night!"

And Bilddad the son of Jimdad went forth to sit at the feet of the wise men of Egypt. And it came to pass that full soon his heaving bosom rested on the onyx trimmings of the bar, and his right foot was in tender touch with the brass rail at the base thereof.

And a great joy shone forth from his eyes as he murmured: "Six beers—what are you going to have?"

And when the night was far spent, Bilddad the son of Jimdad drew zig-zaggingly high unto his habitation, and his knees were prone to wobble with much uncertainty of purpose.

And Maud, the wife of Bilddad the son of Jimdad, stood in the open door, and she made scornful conjecture, saying: "Ha! Ha! Thou did'st sit at the feet of the wise men of Egypt, eh? Thou look'st the part, for, methinks, the wise men of Egypt used you for a doormat. Thou did'st also imbibe wisdom—from a stein! Bah, Bilddad! Speak not to me of politics! Come, now, stand before me, Bilddad, and with straightforward voice say after me these words: 'I simply stood and heard those speakers shout!'"

And Bilddad the son of Jimdad swayed gently to and fro in the light of the breaking morn, and he spake, saying: "I shimplly sh'ood an' h'er zoash sheekers spout!"

And of the fretful finish of Bilddad the son of Jimdad let there be no cruel chronicle made.

Peebleonthebeach.

And it came to pass that a certain City Man looked upon the sun when it was red, and he communed with himself, saying: "Behold! the summer

approacheth on rubber shoes, and the mercury will soon be up against the roof of its habitation; therefore, it behooveth me to journey quickly unto the Land of Peebleonthebeach, lest peradventure, a great humidity shall rise up over the city and transform me into a state of meltedness."

And the City Man spake unto his wife and his wife's nearest kinswoman; and unto all the diminutive members of his own individual tribe, saying: "Behold, the bow-wow days will soon be upon us; therefore let us pull down the blinds, place our worldly possessions in the trapped depths of the safety-vault, and hie us to that balmy peacefulness which the gentle-voiced advertisements say abounds with a joyous plenitude in the Land of Peebleonthebeach forever and ever."

And the wife of the City Man and her nearest kinswoman and all the diminutive members of his own individual tribe made swift answer, and spake, saying: "Let's!"

And it came to pass that they journeyed into the Land of Peebleonthebeach, and their hearts were glad within them, for the scene was fair to look upon, and the ocean was full of cold water.

And lo! even as they looked a hot wave arrived on a fast train from the City and enveloped all the Land of Peebleonthebeach, and humidity also arrived in perspirations quantities, and made the Land of Peebleonthebeach look and feel like the innermost recesses of a Japanese warship during a battle in the newspapers.

And the City Man and the City Man's wife and his wife's nearest kinswoman, and all the diminutive members of his own individual tribe, forsook their raiment and rushed into the ocean, which was full of cold water, saying to one another: "Ha! ha! the humidity cannot touch us here!"

And behold! the waves put on their white caps and communed one with another, saying: "The Cityites are in our midst; let us make merry with them!"

And straightway the little waves collaborated in a successful effort to land on the City Man's solar plexus, and what they did to his was a plentiful plenitude. And unto the wife of the City Man the little waves did likewise, until she was fain to scream sufficiency. And the undertow grabbed the City Man's wife's kinswoman and stood her on her head, and rendered her unfit for speechification.

And the members of the life-saving station worked overtime hauling from the cavernous depths of the ocean the diminutive members of the City Man's own individual tribe; and trouble was their portion.

And when the Cityites were come back from the bosom of the mighty



Until She Was Fain to Scream Sufficiency.

deep, the Mosquito and the Landlord presented their bills, and yet; unto this very hour the City Man knoweth not which bill penetrated with the most terrifying penetrativeness.

And it came to pass that the City Man knew no peace in the Land of Peebleonthebeach, and he communed with himself, saying: "Lo! the gentle-voiced advertisement is a delusion and a snare; for the wild waves are even an automobile chauffeur for rudeness; the humidity followeth unceasingly, and the Mosquito stingeth like an adder. Therefore will I gather the remnants of my tribe about me and flee for the City whence I came, lest, peradventure, the Landlord shall take my wearing apparel, even as he hath taken my purse and the contents thereof."

And straightway he got up and gat. And even as he gat he communed with himself, saying: "Stang!"

Cheer up, Bunch; the wurst is yet to come, as the man said when the waiter didn't bring the sausage.

Yours as heretofore,

J. H. (Copyright, 1908, by G. W. Dillingham Co.)

Leads to "Open Sunday."

French communication seems to be corrupting the British Sabbath. The Sunday society has pleaded the increasing number of visitors—"entente cordialists"—from across the channel unaccustomed to such severe observance, as a reason for opening more galleries and museums on Sundays. The request has been granted with a special view probably to the French invasion which is expected during the Franco-British exhibition this summer. A distinguished French journalist expresses a hope that other places be thrown open—restaurants, for instance.